A First Hand Report from Montgomery, Alabama, by Jennings Perry—Pages 2 and 3

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"Peace and Prosperity" Cannot Be Reconciled With "On the Brink" Diplomacy

We're For Ike — But Not With Nixon and Dulles

When the big news from the White House reached Capitol Hill, Lyndon Johnson revealed unsuspected gifts as a humorist. "It will be an arduous campaign," the Senate's Democratic leader said solemnly. At the moment it looks as if the only arduous part will be to keep up a head of steam in the Democratic candidate until he has chugged to the bitter end of a forlorn course. If it were simply the question of four more years for Ike, the Democrats would be well advised to call off the campaign and put the savings in a kitty for 1960. But it is still too early to assess public reaction to the President's health against the background of his closest associates. As in ancient Rome, the circus is still good politics, and the President's TV appearance was a circus. There was pathos in his assessment of his own health and in his final handclasp with Mamie, but then the President—like the gladiator— is also a man of flesh and blood who commands sympathy.

If the crowds streamed from the TV arena to the polls, there would be no doubt about their decision. But there will be second thoughts between now and November, and much can happen in eight months. If the situation were not so tragic, much comedy would be inspired by Eisenhower's effort to build up the White House as a kind of health resort for cardiac cases. There are questions no skilfully devised commercial will stifle. What if a vote for Eisenhower, who made peace in Korea, becomes a vote for Nixon, who wanted to renew the war in Indo-China? What if sudden death substitutes the symbol of national unity for the symbol of rancorous partisan slander? Eisenhower's non-committal attitude at press conference is no assurance that Nixon will not be on the ticket. The simple old soldier cannot be coupled palatably with the sly young fox.

Triumphs of Conservatism

Though we supported Stevenson in 1952, ours was the first publication left of center to come out for Eisenhower on the peace issue (June 13, 1953: *"Challenge to the Left: 'Back Ike for Peace'."*). We believe four more years of truly conservative government could play a healing role at home and abroad. The achievements of the past two years have been triumphs of bipartisan conservatism under Eisenhower Republican leadership. It was this conservative coalition (with Stevenson and George in it) which finally extinguished McCarthy in 1954; deflated Knowland and the China lobby in 1955; and opened the way to the long delayed meeting at the summit last year. The coming to power of the conservative business men who are the hard core of the Eisenhower administration broke up the coalition right of center and isolated the wild man fringe of the Republican party. In this perspective, despite Brownell and Dulles, the Eisenhower years are marked by the beginnings of a recovery of sanity at home and of disengagement from the stalemate of hate abroad. The forward march of reform cannot be resumed until these preliminaries have been completed.

In this context, Ike has been crucial. The vast popular confidence in him marvelously attests the continued irrationality of politics in a free and literate society. In the miasma of fear stirred up by the cold war, most people are hopelessly confused by real issues and look as trustingly to Ike as a Sixteenth Century yeoman to Good King Hal or a Twentieth Century *moujik* to Papa Stalin; under the surface, we too are comforted by the ancient magic of monarchy. The bright symbol of this simple General reassures the people, albeit as irrationally as a colorful toy does a baby, and they will accept from him what they would not take from a liberal Democrat tainted effectively if falsely in the public mind with that secret bogeyman horror of "Communism."

Paradox: A General Curbs The Pentagon

From this springs the paradox that Ike is the shield of the budget balancers against the military bureaucracy and the aviation lobby; if Stevenson said we are spending more than enough on arms he would be suspect, but if Ike say so there are none to challenge him. The Pentagon grumbles privately against Ike and publicly against the business men in power, i.e. principally Secretaries Humphrey and Wilson, but it cannot manipulate the the usual hysterias against Ike's image. This General, leading a conservative business man's regime, has a freedom of maneuver in making peace which no liberal Democrat could possibly have after the years in which suspicion of liberals and Democrats has been rubbed deep into the public mind. On the other hand, the desire to erase this impression has driven many liberal Democrats to warlike anti-Communist frenzy; their natural spending proclivities makes them the allies of the aviation and armament lobby; a chance to accuse the Republicans of "appeasement" and "softness toward communism" is balm to their battered spirits; their labor allies suffer from the same tendencies. It is for these reasons that we see more chance of peace in the Eisenhower crowd.

But if Ike is to be a part-time President, as he must, then the crises of the past three years in which Dulles and Radford were overruled by Eisenhower on the brink of war, shows how precarious peace must be so long as Dulles shares the helm. The distortions of his hate-blurred eyes were evident again in his new version of a changing Russia, and his morbid urge to gamble with war (this time at Israel's expense) are obvious again in his Middle Eastern policy (see page four). Here, too, the thoughtful voter will pause. "Peace and prosperity" cannot be reconciled with "on the brink" diplomacy.

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A First Hand Report from Montgomery, Once Capital of the Confederacy . . .

By Jennings Perry

MONTGOMERY, ALA.—Flaunting pink and scarlet camellias, magnolias, roses, daffodils, another spring is rushing upon this Deep South city, capital of the State that bills itself on its automobile tags the "Heart of Dixie." Common human jusice comes on at a more pedestrian pace.

At February's end the city's Negro citizens still steadily "walk and pray." Conceivably the flowers bloom less blithely in Negro yards than in white yards. But there can be no question that Montgomery's suddenly and courageously determined Negro population means to secure abatement of one form of discrimination that has become unbearably obnoxious.

Despite the indictment and arrest of almost a hundred of their number for fostering a boycott "without just cause"—a charge preposterous on its face—they gave no sign whatever that they would resume riding the buses until they were accepted "as good as our fares." (The fares are mixed in one box.)

"We are getting stronger in spirit all the time," declared Rev. Ralph D. Abernathy. "We will continue to stand together, asking for guidance and protection for ourselves—and understanding for them."

Young Attorney Fred D. Gray, legal spokesman for the resolute Negroes, said the boycott "is and will go on being 99 per cent effective."

In the whole greening city, though the division of wills was sharp along racial lines, there was no evidence of the violence lugubriously foretold by Mayor Tacky Gayle and the county grand jury. The boycott was visible only in the big yellow buses rumbling through the streets almost unoccupied, the few white passengers clustered in the very front seats as if to sit farther back even in the empty vehicle would somehow put white supremacy in doubt.

Gave Up Buses for Lent

The Negroes speak of the situation with great good humor. They call the buses "yellow ghosts." They do not say boycott but "protest." Increasingly they like the term "passive resistance." One cook told her mistress, "Of course I'm not having anything to do with that old boycott; I don't want any trouble. I'm staying clean away from those buses." Asked about his part in the movement, another Negro said placidly, "I gave up the buses for Lent."

Dangerous tension is admitted only on the white side; Negroes insist that if there should be "trouble" the whites would have to precipitate it. The Negro council halls are their churches; their watchword is "righteousness"; they ceaselessly admonish each other to firmness with serenity, to "love everybody."

It is a baffling kind of resistance. It began Dec. 5 when Mrs. Rosa Parks was arrested for refusing to give up her seat to a white man and "move back." A seamstress, she had boarded the bus after her day's work, tired, her arms full of bags. She had no thought of making a test case. "I was just tired. I had paid my money and I was tired. All at once, I just didn't do it."

But incidents had been shaping to the protest before that. Last March 7, Claudette Colvin, a schoolgirl, was handcuffed and taken to jail for not moving back when ordered. In October, another girl, Mary Louise Smith, was taken from the Day Street bus and fined $9. When Mrs. Parks was arrested the long-suffering Negro community took action by something amounting to spontaneous combustion. That night they "talked about it at church." The next day they started staying off the buses.

At first, white Montgomery felt certain the movement would fall through. "White and blacks have lived together here for over a hundred years. The Negroes always have behaved." The firmness of the protest is something white Montgomery yet cannot understand. It was genuinely surprised when "mediation" did not end the stay-off. It looked to the authorities.

Mayor W. A. (but nobody calls him anything but Tacky) Gayle complied by calling on the white housewives to break the boycott by refusing to haul their cooks in their own cars. The Mayor should have known better. Almost all whites who are anybody in Montgomery are used to having colored cooks. The housewives continued to uphold this old Southern custom by going for and taking home their servants every day.

So They "Moved On"

The authorities tried other persuasions. Negroes using their own cars were stopped by the police. Negroes meeting to ride with each other in car pools were ordered not to congregate on the streets—to "move on." They moved on to parking lots owned by Negroes, met their rides there. Others simply trudged to work.

They do to this day. The question rises: who then is so injured or discommoded by the protest that violence need be anticipated, that criminal prosecutions must be instituted? The housewives have their cooks, Negroes working for other employers reach their jobs one way or another. There has been no picketing of the buses, no attempt to damage white property.

The obvious answer is that the buses have been hurt in their revenues. From 60 to 70 per cent of the bus patrons have been Negroes. When the Negroes began "walking and praying" the buses began losing about $3,000 a day. The system had a 10 cent fare; an emergency increase to 15 cents was granted. It is estimated the system still is losing $1,200 to $1,500 a day. Some schedules have been abandoned, some drivers laid off.

Negro leaders of the protest say they are sorry for the drivers laid off. They say they are not against the bus system—that it has just been caught in the middle. "We are," they repeat—exasperatingly to the whites, "just against injustice."

Though the sympathy of the authorities for the bus system may be taken for granted, the answer that the bus plight is the whole cause of the prosecution of the protest leaders is poetic. What mainly has been injured is white assurance, based on the past, that when told what to do Negroes would "behave."

Once embarked on their unprecedented protest, the Negroes sought guidance they could trust. Their teachers responded (24 have been indicted) but among them their main direction was found in two young men: Abernathy, pastor of the Negro First Baptist Church, and Rev. M. L. (Martin Luther!) King, Jr., pastor of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church, in whose flock are many of the students at nearby State Teachers College.

"Honored"—By The Sheriff

Abernathy is a big man with a well-deep resonant voice, born 27 years ago at Linden, in Marengo County, in the middle of the Alabama Black Belt. Educated entirely in the South, he came to the Montgomery church four years ago. His composure (it is the antithesis of resignation) is monumental. When waiting for the sheriff to arrest him at his home "I felt," he says, "highly honored. It gave me an inner feeling of call, that I am being persecuted for a great cause. I gave thanks to my Maker."

He has endeavored to share his own poise. He reprehends all violence. He believes that if it had not been for the ministerial exhortations and guidance there might have been violence, "maybe a race riot." "I have told my people to try to be like Christ, when stones are thrown at them to return bread." Of the movement he says, "We are not trying to tear down anything, we are trying to *improve* something."

He is positive "there is less danger than ever of any riot

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. . . Now The "Capital" of The Southern Negro's New Gandhi-Style Revolt

from our side. I can't say for the other side but we pray for them, too."

King also is 27, a native of Atlanta where his father is pastor of a large church, as was his grandfather. He went to Moorehouse College at Atlanta, then to Boston University. His accent is less Deep South than Abernathy's. His congregation is a little better circumstanced. But his counsel is the same.

He says, "There is not a tension between the Negro and whites. There is only a conflict between justice and injustice. If our victory is won—and it will be won—it will be a victory for Negroes, a victory for justice, a victory for free people and for democracy. . . . We are using the weapon of love."

The Whites Had Their "Protest," Too

The other outstanding Negro leader is not a minister; he is E. D. Nixon, a Pullman porter, running between Montgomery and Chicago for years. For years he has been a pillar of reason and courage among the Negroes of his city, respected alike by Negroes and whites. He is big, solid. He has humor that can be telling without biting. A former president of the Alabama NAACP, he knows how to rally his people with a jest:

"You stopped riding the buses when you were arrested. Now you are arrested for not riding." Of the bitter white reaction to the boycott, "*They* had a protest at the University of Alabama where Autherine Lucy was protested out of school." He makes his hearer laugh with such truth by juxtaposition. His home has been bombed. He is, apparently, imperturbable.

From the white men of the cloth in Montgomery, the Negroes have had little open comfort. The Rev. Robert S. Graetz, pastor of a Lutheran mission church, has stood with his all-Negro flock. Though sugar has been put in his gasoline, his tires have been slashed, and he has been called before the Grand Jury, he has not been indicted. He is from West Virginia. Other white voices for moderation have been Rev. Robert Hughes, ordained Methodist preacher from Gadsden, Ala., who is preparing to go to a mission in Africa, and Dr. Thomas Thrasher, rector of the Episcopal Church of the Ascension, the most fashionable church in town. Mayor Gayle is a member of Dr. Thrasher's church, so is Luther Ingalls, organizer of the Central Alabama White Citizens Council. Thrasher, overlooking the unconcealed grumbling in his vestry, has sought to mediate the bus dispute.

The Fiction of "Outside" Influence

White Montgomery likes to think the boycott has been "put up from outside." The fact is that it is 100 per cent Negro and 100 per cent local. The Negroes now have financial aid from the NAACP for legal help. From the beginning their representative has been young Fred Gray, one of the two Negro lawyers in Montgomery. Gray's mother was a cook who "managed to get us an education." He studied at the Teachers College. He took his law at Western Reserve in Ohio, working his way through school, passed the Ohio bar and the Alabama bar, returning to Montgomery 18 months ago. He looks young, looks thoughtful. He has been indicted for bringing suit against segregation in the buses but shows no worry about that. The Negroes depend on his advice day in and day out.

The Negroes retained Gray to act for them not only because they had confidence in him but also because they had nowhere else to go for counsel. Ordinarily a Negro "in trouble" in Montgomery tries to get an irreproachable white Southern lawyer, finding he fares better before juries than if he has a lawyer of any liberal tinge. In the present case, the white bar simply is unavailable. One old-family lawyer of sometime liberality has confessed privately, "I'd have to have had $50,000 for the case—paid over the next five years. I wouldn't have any other business for at least that long."

The situation of Negroes in Montgomery has not been markedly different from that in other cities of the Deep South. They pay taxes (and fares) for what they don't get. Montgomery has, for example, a rather fine park—Oak Park, with a zoo. Oak Park is bounded on two sides by a Negro residential district . . . but the Negro children can't even go into the park to see the monkeys.

Whites Boycott Whites

Negroes make up about half of Montgomery's 100,000 population. Scarcely 2 per cent of them are registered to vote. The poll tax stops them, and various other tricky hindrances—including "interpretation of the Constitution." Their disfranchisement is a major factor in their treatment. Fred Gray says, "If only 10 per cent could vote, we would have a different attitude at city hall."

Gray may be right; but meanwhile not only Mayor Tacky Gayle but his two fellow commissioners have openly become WCCers [White Citizens Council]. The WCC, incidentally, is busily canvassing business and professional men in Montgomery, who fear that if they do not join and pay the $3 fee they will be blackballed as "nigger lovers" and faced with a *white* boycott.

One quaint and somehow little-noticed angle of the city's prosecution attack on the resistance: three of the 99 arrested under the indictment are soldiers at Maxwell Field—Master Sgt. Booker T. Holmes of Emerson, Ark., Sgt. Fred Ellis of Montgomery and Sgt. Carlton Otis of Birmingham, all of the airforce. Some apprehension is whispered in Montgomery that Federal action might be taken, even that the city be posted "out of bounds." This would be disastrous, since the $54 million last year spread in the county by Maxwell Field is just three times the $17 million from all agriculture in Montgomery County.

No Jim Crow at Maxwell Field

There is no segregation at Maxwell Field, where white Montgomerians work side by side and eat side by side with Negro Montgomerians . . . only to step off the Government grounds and pale with horror at the thought of riding unsegregated in the city buses. This is an incongruous thing of which the Negroes long have been aware, though, it would seem, not to the white Montgomerians.

Returning to the engrossing issue of violence: if the situation joined at Montgomery is not to end that way then what way? The Negroes patently have a strong case by any rule, even Deep Southern rules. In shunning the buses they have not commited integration but the opposite. It is hard to debate their right not to ride. As for a conspiracy, "If white women are mistreated at a store, they tell each other about it and don't go there," the Negroes say. "It's exactly the same with us and the buses." The reasoning is formidable.

In Montgomery Negroes are asking only for "decent treatment" which means for "first come, first serve" on the buses. Years ago, Virginius Dabney of Richmond proposed just this as a gesture of some accommodation from white to black. What they ask is the minimum of "right" and legal persecution won't change that or move their determination. If they do not win they will walk and the bus company will go broke without them.

Thus circumstances have put up to white Montgomery a nice decision affecting the most radical threat of Deep South whites. They have said they will abolish their schools rather than accept integration. But will they actually in Montgomery, before they will agree to first come-first serve, accept the abolition of their buses?

Jennings Perry, our colleague on PM and The New York Compass, will cover the South regularly for The Weekly.

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Letting the Record of the Sen. Foreign Relations Hearing Speak for Itself

How Dulles Misrepresented Our Arms Shipments to Saudi Arabia

Senator Smith (R. N.J.) asked Mr. Dulles "if we send tanks to Saudi Arabia, why should we not send corresponding equipment to Israel?" The Secretary replied that under the 1950 agreement it had been the general U.S. policy to avoid sending arms either to Israel or its Arab neighbors but this was different "because things like tanks cannot get across the desert." This was Explanation No. 1, and assumed that Senators, press and public had forgotten El Alamein.

When Senator Humphrey (D. Minn.) asked about the tanks, Mr. Dulles amended this somewhat, saying he had been "advised by the military people, who know about these things, that they could not be gotten across the desert from Dhahran to Israel." When Humphrey pointed out that a National Geographic map showed there is a road from Dhahran "up to the very frontier of Israel, through the neighboring State of Jordan," Mr. Dulles came up with Explanation No. 2, that these "are the kind of tanks which are usable practically only for training purposes." *

Humphrey then wanted to know why Saudi Arabia wanted the tanks. "Do they just need tanks to feel good," he asked Dulles, "I mean if . . . you cannot move the tanks against any particular foreign enemy?" This evoked Explanation No. 3. "The purpose of the tanks, Senator," Dulles now explained, "is to maintain internal security. . . . There have been large-scale riots and disturbances at various points in that area."

Senator Morse attacked the tank sale from another angle:

Senator MORSE. Is Saudi Arabia a totalitarian government?

Secretary DULLES. It is an absolute monarchy.

Senator MORSE. And is it a government in which the individual citizens are without democratic rights?

Secretary DULLES. I would say no.

Senator MORSE. You would say no?

Secretary DULLES. I would say they do not have the type of democratic rights which we have here in the United States.

Senator MORSE. Is Israel, in contrast, a democratic state?

Secretary DULLES. I believe that it has a parliamentary form of government. It does not have our type of representative government, but it has more the British type of a parliamentary government. . . .

Senator MORSE. Now, Mr. Secretary, when we ship arms to a monarchy, such as Saudi Arabia where the individual citizen does not possess democratic rights as we know them . . . might they not very well be used to keep down uprising on the part of the dissident groups within the country that seek to establish liberty for the individual?

Secretary DULLES. It could be so used, Senator, although actually the demonstrations which have in the past occurred there are believed to be of alien inspiration and not to be the natural revolt.

Senator Morse finally succeeded in getting the Secretary to admit (1) that these were "shooting tanks," and (2) that they could be transhipped by water to Egypt for an attack on Israel. Then Senator Morse asked him if it weren't true that these "eighteen shooting tanks" if "congregated outside of any major city of Israel" with proper support then "the chances of that city surviving . . . would not be very good?" The Secretary declined to answer, on the ground that this was "a military question."

Now there has been a report around Washington for several weeks that we sent Saudi Arabia in the past year from four to six B-26 bombers. Senator Morse asked Mr. Dulles whether we had sent American military aircraft to the Arab states since 1951. The first answer was that there had been "some shipments of aircraft, but no jets." Then Senator Morse asked whether these were fighters or bombers. To this Mr. Dulles replied that he had been told and would "want to confirm this and correct the record if necessary" that only cargo planes for civilian purposes had been sent. But before the transcript went to the printer, this was corrected to "We have sold a very limited number of military aircraft of the propeller type." Whether these were fighters or bombers was left unanswered, and the State Department next day refused any further information as "classified." This, to put it mildly, is no record of shining candor or impartiality.

A curious slip was made by Secretary Dulles before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in seeking to excuse Saudi Arabian discrimination against Americans of Jewish origin. He told the Committee that for centuries the Arabs had felt "a very particular animosity toward Jews, because they credited the assassination of Mohammed to a Jew." An aide leaned over and whispered an objection in the Secretary's ear. "Now," Mr. Dulles added, "my advisers tell me I am wrong, but I am not sure. . . ." Mohammed was not assassinated; he died in the arms of a favorite wife.

* Hanson W. Baldwin (*New York Times*, Feb. 29) called Mr. Dulles's testimony "somewhat misleading." According to Baldwin, the tanks are the M-41, "the standard light tank of the U.S. Army . . . with a 76-mm high velocity gun . . . specially useful for desert work."

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